



News Release

WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWS MEDIA ADVISORY

Send-off ceremony Sunday in Oak Creek for 16 Afghanistan-bound Army Guard troops

A send-off ceremony to bid farewell to 16 soldiers of a Wisconsin Army National Guard task force eventually bound for service in Afghanistan will be held at 1:00 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 8, 2006, at the Oak Creek National Guard armory, 8520 S. Howell Ave., Oak Creek.

Soldiers and their families will be joined at the send-off by the senior leadership of the Wisconsin National Guard. Music will be provided by the 132nd Army band.

The 16 soldiers are not part of a single unit, although most of them — including task force commander Col. Dominic Cariello — come from the Milwaukee-based 57th Field Artillery Brigade. In Afghanistan they will form part of Coalition Task Force Phoenix, which is made up of soldiers from the National Guards of a number of states. The Wisconsin soldiers' mission will be training and advising a brigade-size element of the Afghan national army in order to further stabilize the country and help prevent the re-emergence of terrorism.

Soldiers will travel to Camp Shelby, Miss., later Sunday afternoon before they eventually deploy overseas in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

With this latest mobilization, the Wisconsin Guard has about 1,970 soldiers and airmen on active duty. Of those, approximately 1,750 are currently deployed overseas and about 95 others — including these 16 Task Force Phoenix soldiers — are eventually bound for overseas missions in Afghanistan. Most of the Wisconsin Guard's other deployed soldiers are serving in Kuwait and Iraq.

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EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS: News media organizations are welcome to cover this event at the Oak Creek armory, 8520 S. Howell Ave., Oak Creek. Prior arrangements are not required.

The formal ceremony will begin promptly at 1:00 p.m. and should last less than 30 minutes. In addition to the 16 soldiers and their families, participants are expected to include Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, Brig. Gen. Kerry Denson, and task force commander Col. Dominic Cariello. Music will be provided by a brass quintet from the Guard's 132nd Army Band. News media may photograph the event and interview consenting soldiers and families.

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